

In re Appln. of HARDEE, et al.
Application No. 09/998,603

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in light of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks. An Office action dated July 2, 2003 is presently pending in the application. Claims 1-27, 32 and 34 were amended, and Claims 28-31 and 33 were cancelled in this Amendment. Therefore, Claims 1-27, 32 and 34 are pending in the application.

In the Office action, Claims 1-21 were allowed, and Claims 29, 31, 33 and 34 were objected to as being dependent from a rejected base claim, but were indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In order to expedite prosecution of this application, Applicants have rewritten Claims 22 and 32 to include all of the limitations of original Claims 31 and 33, respectively. As stated above, these claims had already been indicated as allowable, and thus Applicants submit that the amended independent claims are in condition for allowance. The remaining claims in the application either have been indicated as allowable, or are now dependent from allowable independent claims. Thus, Applicants submit that all of the claims in the application are allowable for at least being dependent upon allowable independent claims. Moreover, Applicants submit that the dependent claims further define the invention over the prior art.

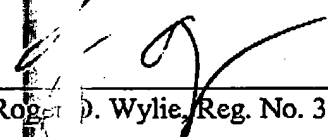
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CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 1-27, 32 and 34 define patentable subject matter, and that the application is in good and proper condition for allowance. Such action is respectfully solicited.

If the foregoing does not result in Notice of Allowance in the application, Applicants earnestly solicit the Examiner to call the undersigned at 206-521-5984.

Respectfully submitted,



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